

Who Reports Child Abuse or Neglect?

In fiscal year 1998-1999, 32,206 child abuse or neglect incidents were reported to CPS. These allegations were reported by relatives (18%), law enforcement (16%), friends/neighbors (11%), and school staff (13%). Other sources, including health care and social services personnel, courts, and the victims themselves reported the remaining 42% of allegations.

Who are the Abused Children?

After investigation, 9,592 or 30% of the 32,206 investigated cases were “indicated”, meaning that enough evidence was gathered to lead to the reasonable conclusion that incidents of abuse or neglect had occurred.

Of the indicated victims, 4,404 or 46% were reported cases of neglect, 2,147 or 22% were cases of sexual abuse, and 1,857 or 19% were cases of physical abuse. The remaining 1,184 reported cases were other types of abuse, including medical abuse and emotional abuse. Sixty-three percent of the children in indicated cases of child abuse and neglect were Caucasian, 32% were African-American, and 5% were children of “other” races.

There were 5,216 female indicated victims (54%) and 4,359 male victims (45%). Children under age three made up 21% of the abused/neglected population, children ages 3-5 accounted for 19%, children ages 6-11 for 36 %, and children ages 12-17 the remaining 24%.

Who are the Perpetrators of Child Abuse and Neglect?

More than 85% of the indicated perpetrators of child abuse and neglect in Tennessee were parents or relatives of the victims. In 43% of child abuse/neglect cases where a precipitating event was identified, the perpetrator had a substance abuse problem.